

REMARKS

Favorable reconsideration of this application, in light of the present amendments, and following discussion is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-18 are pending; Claims 1, 6, 10 and 11 are amended; and Claim 18 is newly added herewith. It is respectfully submitted that no new matter is added by this amendment.

In the outstanding Office Action, Claims 1-5, 11, and 13 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as anticipated by Granberg (U.S. Pat. No. 4,014,739); Claims 6, 7, and 14 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as anticipated by Greve (U.S. Pat. No. 5,770,016); Claims 8 and 15 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Greve in view of Hatton (U.S. Pat. No. 2,105,593); and Claims 9, 10, 16, and 17 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Greve in view of Schlör et al. (U.S. Pat. No. 4,853,087, hereafter Schlör).

Applicants acknowledge with appreciation the indication that Claim 12 contains allowable subject matter. Newly added Claim 18 represents the subject matter of Claim 12 in independent form, and is therefore believed to be in condition for allowance.

Regarding the rejection of Claims 1-5, 11, and 13 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as anticipated by Granberg, that rejection is respectfully traversed.

As previously explained by the Applicants, when a mold with a net is used repeatedly for producing pulp molded articles, pulp fiber adheres and accumulates on the net, which causes unevenness in a thickness of a molded article, or may impair the appearance of the molded article. Thus, in the past, it has been necessary for the net to be removed and cleaned. However, where a net is fixed to a paper molding part by welding, it is not easy to remove the

net. When a net is fixed with wire, or a similar material, removal is possible but very laborious.¹

In light of these difficulties, the Applicants developed the papermaking molds of the present invention. Claim 1 relates to a papermaking mold including a papermaking part of a prescribed shape, and a net covering the papermaking part, and a fixing member disposed on the periphery of the net. The fixing member is directly attached to the peripheral part to fix the net, such that the net is free from a force applied to the fixing member.

Granberg relates to a mold construction having a removable base member. In the Advisory Action of November 21, 2003, the Office Action indicates that the fixing member of Granberg is the entire structure numbered 16. While Applicants respectfully disagree with this interpretation, it is believed that the present amendment overcomes any such interpretation.

More specifically, Claim 1 explicitly recites that the net does not receive a force received by the fixing member. By contrast, as illustrated in, for example, Figures 2-4 of Granberg, element 42b of the support frame 16 is positioned such that the first and second screens 30 and 32 receive the force exerted between the support frame and the base 18.

Consequently, it is respectfully submitted that Granberg fails to disclose or suggest a fixing member that is directly attached to the peripheral part to fix the net such that the net does not receive a force applied to the fixing member. It is therefore respectfully submitted that Claim 1 patentably distinguishes over Granberg. Likewise, Claims 2-5 are believed to distinguish over Granberg for at least the reasons above set forth with regard to Claim 1.

¹ Specification, page 1, lines 12-17.

Similarly, Claim 11 recites that the first fixing member is directly detachably attached to the first papermaking part and that the first net is free from a force applied to the first fixing member.

As noted above, Granberg fails to disclose or suggest that any of the nets are free from forces applied to any of the fixing members. It is therefore respectfully submitted that Claim 11 patentably distinguishes over Granberg, and it is respectfully requested that the rejection of Claims 11 and 13 be withdrawn.

With regard to the rejection of Claims 6, 7, and 14 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as anticipated by Greve, that rejection is also traversed.

Claim 6 recites a papermaking mold that includes a papermaking part having a prescribed shape, a peripheral part extending outward from the papermaking part, a flange, a papermaking net covering the papermaking part and at least part of the peripheral part, where the part of the net that is covering the peripheral part is positioned so that the flange prevents the net from receiving a clamping force received by the flange. Similarly, independent Claim 14 recites that the flange is positioned to receive a clamping force, thereby preventing the net from receiving the clamping force.

As previously explained by the Applicants, Greve is not in an analogous area of art. Specifically, Greve does not relate to forming pulp molded articles, but relates to plastic technologies, and is therefore not relevant to the pending claims.

Additionally, Applicants respectfully submit that Greve fails to disclose or suggest the flange recited in Claims 6 and 14. In the Advisory Action dated November 21, 2003, the Office Action asserts at page 4 that element 18 of Greve is a flange that prevents the net 16 from receiving a clamping force. However, Applicants note that element 18 is described as a seal, not a flange. Additionally, even if element 18 of Greve were interpreted to be a flange,

the lip of the screen 17 would still receive a clamping force, as is evident from Figure 2 of Greve.

Accordingly, as Greve fails to disclose or suggest that a net does not receive a clamping force, it is respectfully submitted that Claims 6 and 14 patentably distinguish over Greve. It is therefore respectfully requested that the rejection of Claims 6, 7, and 14 be withdrawn.

With regard to the rejection of Claims 8 and 15 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Greve in view of Hatton, that rejection is also traversed.

As noted above, Greve fails to disclose or suggest the features recited in Claims 6 and 14, from which Claims 8 and 15 depend. As Hatton is not relied upon for the teachings identified as deficient in Greve, Hatton is not addressed on its merits.

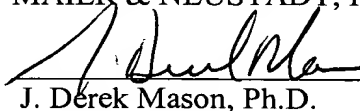
With regard to the rejection of Claims 9, 10, 16, and 17 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Greve in view of Schlör, that rejection is also traversed.

As previously explained, Greve fails to disclose or suggest the flange of Claims 6 and 14, from which Claims 9, 10, 16 and 17 respectively depend. Because Schlör is not relied upon to provide this feature, the merits of Schlör are not addressed herewith.

Consequently, in view of the foregoing discussion and present amendments, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. An early and favorable action is therefore respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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